

NUMBER

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BREAKING BARRIERS

Perspectives on the Writing of Indian History

David L. Beaulieu, Editor

PREFACE

In December of 1974, two sessions concerning the writing of American Indian History were conducted in conjunction with the American Historical Association Conference held in Chicago. The morning session, "Perspectives on Writing Indian History From the Indian Point of View" presented formal papers by Indians who were actively involved in the writing of their tribal histories and/or involved in the development of culturally relevant printed materials. Commentaries on the papers were provided by professional, academically trained anthropologists and historians. The afternoon session, "Problems in the Writing of Indian History" provided an informal forum in which a discussion concerning the topics and issues raised in the morning session as well as other areas of discussion could be conducted.

A major desire in the development of these sessions was to avoid the typical Indian/White relations format which has pervaded historical conferences whenever Indians were the topic of discussion. The purpose of the sessions was not only to develop a dialogue between Indians and professional historians concerning the treatment of Indians by historians. More importantly, it was hoped that the discussion would include the more significant issues concerning the uses of culturally unique concepts of space and time in historiography. Since history as a discipline, with its incumbent philosophies and temporal frame, has arisen out of Western European culture and experience, a significant issue in this dialogue should be the more fundamental question of whether "history" as a western discipline provides an appropriate framework to relate the experience of tribal societies. The exploration of these questions may ultimately not only provide an avenue in which our knowledge of the Indian experience can be expanded but also our knowledge of history itself. The compelling

educational need of Indian communities to maintain and preserve the knowledge inherent in their cultural heritage may, however, overshadow these academic considerations.

When Black Elk finished relating the story of "Buffalo Calf Woman" to John Neihardt, which must have sounded incredible to Neihardt, Black Elk said, "This they tell, and whether it happened so or not, I do not know; but if you think about it, you can see that it is true." In our endeavor to understand the "truth" about the past we may find that it is the nature of truth itself, as each in our own way understands it, which clouds our collective vision.

David Beaulieu
University of Illinois,
Chicago Circle
December, 1976

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The Newberry Library and the American Historical Association jointly hosted the sessions. In particular, Lawrence Towner, Director of the Newberry Library; D'Arcy McNickle, Director of the Center for the History of the American Indian, Newberry Library; Lewis Hanke, President of the American Historical Association; and Jeanette Henry of the American Indian Historical Society were most helpful in creating an atmosphere receptive to a discussion presented by Native American people concerning Indian History and facilitating the sessions.

Special thanks are extended to the presenters, commentators and session leaders who shared their ideas and insights with conference participants and who consented to the publication of the proceedings. These individuals include Alan Slickpoo, Nez Perce Tribe; James Jefferson, Southern Ute Tribe; Ruth Roessel, Navajo Community College; Alfonso Ortiz, University of New Mexico; Floyd O'Neil, University of Utah; Benjamin Keen, Northern Illinois University; Jeanette Henry, American Indian Historical Society; and Robert Bieder and D'Arcy McNickle of the Center for the History of the American Indian.

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Opinions and attitudes expressed by conference participants are their own.

Neither the Council nor the Newberry Library identifies itself with the views of individual participants.

Publication has been made as a public service. No endorsement of individual views of participants is implied. The publication of the proceedings reported herein was made possible by a grant from the Illinois Humanities Council.

FORMAT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

PERSPECTIVES ON

THE WRITING OF INDIAN HISTORY FROM THE INDIAN POINT OF VIEW

Chaired by: Robert Bieder, Associate Director,
Newberry Library Center for the History
of the American Indian

Southern Ute Project

by James Jefferson
Tribal Historian, Southern Ute Tribe

Genocidal Aims Towards Our Culture

by Alan Slickpoo, Director
Nez Perce History and Culture Project
Nez Perce Tribe

Navajo Studies Writing Project

by Ruth Roessel, Director
Navajo Studies Department
Navajo Community College

Commentaries

Benjamin Keen, Professor
Department of History
Northern Illinois University

Floyd A. O'Neil, Professor
Center for the American West
University of Utah

"Some Concerns Central to the Writing
of 'Indian' History"

Alfonso Ortiz, Professor
Department of Anthropology
University of New Mexico

PROBLEMS IN THE WRITING OF INDIAN HISTORY

Co-Chaired by: D'Arcy McNickle, Director, Newberry Library
Center for the History of the American Indian

Jeanette Henry
American Indian Historical Society

SOUTHERN UTE PROJECT

By: James Jefferson

For almost five hundred years, the Native American and his culture, language, religion and behavior have been misunderstood and misinterpreted by the white man. Since Columbus first made the mistake of calling the native people something they were not, that is, citizens of India, the Indians have had many errors and myths built around their character and society.

The Indian was considered a savage, a pagan, and without civilization. Obviously, among some Indian tribes, there was a great deal of savagery, torture, and even cannibalism. However, when interpreted within their own culture, these practices were not deviant, and judged in their own time-frame may not have been savage. We have only to compare the savagery of the Vietnam War or that of the 1973 Middle East War to realize that conflicts between people and cultures in many cases result in acts that can be classified as savagery. The Indian and his wars with other tribes may have been looked upon as ruthless, but the white man's war against the Indian may also be interpreted as savage.

In general, the exploring and conquering white man assumed the Indian to be completely uncivilized and to have a culture much more primitive than his own. Looking at recorded history, we discover that this was not always the case. For example, the Pilgrim fathers landing in New England would never have survived without the help of the Indians who were agriculturally adapted to the surroundings and were able to grow successfully a number of indigenous plants in the area as crops. Without Indian crops, the settlement of the U. S. would have been delayed and probably would have been different than it was.

To appreciate the full significance of the tribal history/literature projects started by various tribes, one should consider them in context with major developments taking place around the country. Such movements and developments as urbanism, self-determination, cultural pluralism, tribalism and institutional relationships have special meaning in the affairs of the nation's Indian communities.

The tribal history/literature projects are involved in more than just the publication of materials. The most significant aspect of these projects lies in the development of a process and procedure by which the knowledge and experience of the community bring the issues of education to bear on institutions as they pertain to special needs of the Indian communities.

The project offered the Southern Ute community was an opportunity to organize the selection and interpretation of materials and other related resources that they alone possessed. Through coordination and cooperation of the agencies selected by the tribe, the Southern Ute People were on their way to publishing a book. The Southern Utes - A Tribal History.

Origin of the Project

The idea to publish a book for the Southern Ute people came from the request of teachers, the general public in the state of Colorado and the nation. The Southern Ute Reservation is situated in a tri-ethnic community of one-third Spanish, one-third Anglo, and one-third Indian people. The school system is public, with Indian students situated in the Bureau of Indian Affairs' dormitory and at home.

As the public relations officer for the tribe, I was to carry on the function of tribal historian and gather the materials from various

archival sources around the country. The initial approach was made to Dr. Robert Delaney at Fort Lewis College who in turn recommended Floyd O'Neil at the University of Utah, American West Center. Floyd O'Neil and Dr. Delaney were requested to meet with the Council and possibly negotiate a contract. This was approved by the Tribal Council with the stipulation that the project be monitored by the Council, with final approval to be made by the Council.

The Council selected James Jefferson as the Council representative and writer for the project. A worker session was agreed upon to estimate the cost for the project. A list of possible sources was established and visits made to each agency. The Boettcher Foundation of Denver, Colorado approved \$5,000 for the initial start. A visit was made with Dr. David Warren from Santa Fe, New Mexico, who (Floyd O'Neil thought might have some funds available for the project.

A contract was negotiated with Mr. Warren for \$11,500 leaving a balance of \$8,500 to be negotiated. The Donner Foundation was approached and the balance of \$8,500 was approved for the completion of the book.

In the meantime, the project was underway and was half completed before the balance of the funding was approved. The go-ahead was given by the Council with the feeling that the project was important enough to be completed even if they had to fund the project themselves.

Research Problems

A community approach was difficult because of past contracts made by other researchers who had made the Indian community suspicious of any type of study.

A barrier had to be broken to assure the people that we were not going to print anything out of line and that the Council had the final word with the community people participating. The job alone was difficult because of the untrained personnel in the community. We could have gone to trained personnel, but the Council felt that we must do the job alone with our own talent. We knew a wealth of available tribal people who knew their own history. People were selected from within the community to record and take down the oral tradition. With many of the Indian people a period of story telling came about, and many times an interviewer had to sit and listen to hours of conversation before he was able to get the material needed. Sometimes, many sessions were necessary as the informant would not remember the details or was too involved with other activities at the time. Sometimes, the informant died or was too sick to discuss the information requested. In many cases the tape recorder did not work properly and many hours of work were lost.

The biggest problem to tackle was the people's concern not to print oral traditions which were sacred to the tribe. Yet, the history had to be as complete as possible. With limited space, the writing was not complete, and it had to be geared to the eighth grade reading level, leaving quite a gap. Many of the tribal people had different versions of events that had happened at different stages in our history. They did agree on the mythology about the origin of the Ute people.

Structure of the Book

It was decided that the book be divided into two sections to utilize fully the resource people available. (1) American West Center and the Southwest Studies would research and write the first part dealing with Anglo-Indian relations.

(2) The Southern Ute would write their own history taken from the oral interpretation of the people. Many parts of the history should not be written due to the requests of the people. Many times these parts were sacred and not to be revealed to anyone other than Southern Utes who had an interest or were selected by the teller to be the recipient.

In early times, every society developed its own myths which played an important part in the society's religious life. This religious significance has always separated myths from similar stories, such as folk-tales and legends. The people of a society may tell folk-tales and legends for amusement without believing them, but they consider their mythology sacred and completely true. It tells how a group of people developed a particular social system with its many customs and ways of life. We can better understand the feelings and values that bind members of that society into one group.

The People, as they called themselves, were born of the mother earth, and the heaven was the father. Many tribes have a sacred place or mountain where they emerged to start their life on earth and which is considered sacred to them. The oral tradition or mythology tells us of the People's birth in the Americas and that they did not come across the Bering Straits as indicated by white America.

How different were the lives of these people from our usual stereotype of the American Indian clad in feathers, riding on a pinto pony, living in teepees and hunting buffalo. Even many of the buffalo-hunting Indians had been settled agriculturalists before the introduction of the horse. Surely, the self-image, personally perceived, and the actual needs of these people with their long history of a settled life is very different from how other people think of them.

For the Southern Utes perhaps the adjustment to a twentieth century life was less difficult than for the more settled groups in other parts of the United States. Despite these differences, almost all Native American people have some of the same problems. These problems stem from the fact that they are a minority group in a rapidly growing and a highly competitive culture. In some instances, Southern Utes have become lost in the changes of a way of living that was never their own. They have become simultaneously a living survival of the romantic figure in the past of a young nation struggling to develop a tradition, a cultural heritage; and at the same time the savage villain that killed and burned. This way of life that had meaning for the Southern Utes is gone now, through their continual contact with the main stream of American life.

Ends Accomplished

One of the biggest accomplishments was to have the book "Southern Ute Tribe - A Tribal History," to be introduced into the Public school system on and near the reservation as part of the history curriculum. 200 copies were taken by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to be introduced and distributed into the Bureau schools in various parts of the country.

For the first time the tribe had full control of a project with university personnel as consultants. The end results proved beneficial for everyone concerned and proved to people that Indian tribes are capable of handling their own projects. Many tribes would now be able to follow suit and write their own histories without someone dictating how the project should be run.

The Southern Ute Community is richer in pride and cultural awareness, and in the fact that there is now an Indian in both the community and classroom.

GENOCIDAL AIMS TOWARDS OUR CULTURE

By Alan Slickpoo

The American Indian has been seen as having another lifestyle, which is in conflict with the white man's lifestyle. Consequently, we have become victims of a stereotyped identity seen only as "pagans" living an uncivilized lifestyle.

Along with the deceptive views, the Euro-American brought with him a culture in hopes of assimilating the Indian into the "Old World" cultures or the white man's civilization. This policy introduced critical misunderstanding and conflict between Indians and Europeans.

When we consider the maltreatment of Native Americans in our American history, we must take into account that these books were written and designed for cultural genocidal goals....to totally destroy our beliefs and our way of life.

Books written by early day writers have, no doubt, presented one-sided views of our history and our way of life; views that have alienated us, even to the extent of denying us the opportunity to express our views, or represent our culture in a true fashion.

Alongside of misrepresenting our way of life and our history, the federal government set forth directives relating to policies designed to totally destroy the Native American culture and assimilate us to the European ways. "Convert" and "indoctrinate" were the orders of the day -- a more precise

word is "brainwash."

To learn the white man's education we had to learn a language foreign to us. The American Indian was practically forced to read these books, which he did not fully understand. For example, many of us recall how we had to live with "Dick, Jane and Spot" from within our teepees.

Many of these books portrayed the American Indian in a stereotyped image, as being "a heathen, a savage, and uncivilized" to a point that the buckskin clothing and the eagle feathers became the symbols of the white man's devil. The early missionaries were well equipped with this type of reading material.

As the years went on, fictional publications, including comic books, were produced to the public in the "Western World." We also must recognize the role of movie industries, which have played a significant role in introducing the bad, ignorant, shiftless, drunken Indian to the general American public. This propaganda presented negative views about the proud and courageous Native American, especially to those who had little, if any, contact with him.

Every conceivable method was utilized to destroy the true image of the American Indian, as a brave warrior, a great hunter, a philosopher, a family man and a courageous leader, who was able to survive and meet the challenges of life.

The propaganda was so well designed and implemented, that I recall, as a young boy, when the Indian children would play "cowboys and Indians" all of us wanted the role of being the "cowboy," or the guy who came to the

heroic rescue of the young, white maiden, or we would cheer when the cavalry would swoop down on the attacking Indians, slaying three Indians with one shot. It is amazing to realize how one can be brainwashed.

We recognize the fact that there has been a lack of good communication and consequently a poor interpretation of our history by many authors or writers of American Indian history.

The exploitation of writing about American Indian history and culture became very popular, even to the extent where anyone who got on the "bandwagon" of American Indian history became an "expert" on the life of the Indian, all except the Indian himself.

Many books relating to our history and culture have been written to extremes using sensationalism in order to attract the attention of the pocketbooks of the readers and students in American Indian history.

We have, in the past, and perhaps even today, been given very little, if any, consultation in reviewing or editing a book which relates to our life. Perhaps it has been assumed that we are not qualified experts about our own way of life, about our history and about our culture, within the world of white "experts" and scholars. It seems that we have been identified as a people with no sentiments and no knowledge, as to how we felt about our own history, or how we have actually lived it.

Today, we have taken the position of taking a new look at our written history. To do this we are rapidly learning the techniques of the white man's ways. We, Indians and non-Indians alike, have come to realize that an important part of the American culture was almost totally destroyed. Many significant

parts of our history have become forgotten and the knowledge of some of our cultural values have become extinct.

The time has come when we must reintroduce ourselves to the general public, and let them know that we, too, played an important role in the development of America. Many of the American Indian tribes have, basically, relied upon their oral history. Because of this, and our perseverance to survive the movements of conflicting cultures, we are finally able to make the rest of the world realize the damage that has been inflicted and that restitution must be made by encouraging a greater interest for the preservation of the knowledge of American Indian history and culture. American Indian tribes must take a strong position in preserving their own history and their culture. An effective approach can be made by producing written material which will take an important part within the book-world, to help erase and correct misinterpreted or distorted views about our history and our culture.

Too many books have been written without the expressed consent and endorsement of the Indian tribes concerned. "Grassroots" Indian expertise or consultants have been ignored, while compiling pertinent information or in the editing process, prior to the publication of a book about a particular tribe.

Perhaps, the academic world has neglected to recognize the fact that the American Indian tribes do have expertise in the various fields which relate to their history and their culture. They are considered as having a "degree" as recognition of their knowledge, just like that given to historians, anthropologists, or linguists. In other words we have our own experts or "professors," if you will, within our own tribes who should be given the opportunity to express their views and prove that they are knowledgeable, more so than the biased view that is presented by a non-Indian author, in the

It is with this in mind that the Nez Perce tribe of Idaho has undertaken the task of re-writing their own history, to present their life and experiences that have historical significance.

We have compiled, written, edited and published our own books, concerning our history, culture and lore. With the cooperation of our elderly members, we have produced two books, one on legends and one on our history and culture covering the period from the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1805 to 1940. I am now in the process of completing the third book which relates the tribal history of the 1940s to the present day. We also anticipate the development of an authoritative dictionary of the native Nez Perce language, as a part of our publication project, as our answer to the existing written material used to interpret our language.

Our book writing project is conducted under the direct authority of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee, as the governing board or council of the Nez Perce tribe. All manuscript editing is done by the delegated authority of the executive committee.

Because of the strict requirements concerning qualifications and background experience of "grassroots" life in the Nez Perce world, a Project Director was solicited and hired by the tribe, who would have the direct responsibility of coordinating and implementing the overall project. He is responsible for the compiling, preparing, and editing in a final draft the manuscript for printing and publication. So far I have been the director who was hired by the tribe, and as such, the author of the books.

We hired a consultant, who served as a consultant only, and his services were utilized on a limited basis. This covered the technical aspects of the

composition, the printing process and financial matters, as well as providing the technical terminology of anthropology and other subjects in order to satisfy the so-called "academic world."

The most important factor in the production of our books has been our own resource people, who are the selected elders of our tribe and who know the significant parts of our history and our culture. They were interviewed individually as experts and tribal consultants on the various aspects of Nez Perce life. We then called in all the tribal consultants interviewed, as a panel, to discuss any questionable or controversial issue relating to our history and culture. By using this system we learned that it would be highly effective in producing an authentic book about the Nez Perce people; more so than relying on biased written reports made by early-day military men or missionaries, who wrote their reports for self-protection and which are now stored in the archives for modern-day research needs.

It is gratifying to know that we have a growing interest among our Native American brothers and sisters to write about their own history. Many of the North American tribes have come to the realization of the importance of recording and preserving the knowledge of our own histories and cultures.

Our gratitude must be acknowledged to the many federal and state agencies, especially to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts and for the Humanities people, who have taken interest in these projects, by lending financial and other means of support to the American Indian tribes, as well as the support that has been given by the various other foundations. These projects have proven their educational value, and the publications are being used as reference material by students of American Indian history. The demand is growing for these Indian publications by the indications of the orders being received.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the American INdians have been studied to extreme. To the extreme, perhaps, that we have produced a population of "Indian experts" greater than the population of American Indians, but we have learned to exploit our own history and culture as the way to answer the books that have been written on the American Indian people. With this in mind, it is becoming a reality, with the support and understanding of scholars, such as you who are presented here today, that we can reach the goals of truth in Native American history. This can best be achieved by cooperation between all concerned in bringing forth the true facts of the American Indian history.

NAVAJO STUDIES WRITING PROJECT

By Ruth Roessel

Rationale

The Navajo Community College was conceived and developed by the Navajo tribe as a center of learning with primary responsibility to serve the residents of the vast Navajo Reservation. The all-Navajo Board of Regents felt from the very beginning that one of the fundamental objectives of the College should be the development of written material dealing with Navajo life and history. In fact, the Board of Regents developed the concept of having the Navajo and Indian Studies area serve as the heart of the College around which all other educational and academic programs would develop. With the idea of the centrality of Navajo and Indian Studies and as a means to implement the physical publication of books, the Regents also established the Navajo Community College Press which has as its primary responsibility the publication of materials developed by personnel within the Navajo and Indian Studies Department.

This emphasis on Navajo material is important because it reflects the belief on the part of the Regents that the collection of stories and the preparation of those data into a rough manuscript should be the responsibility of Navajo People themselves. It is the stated objective of the Board of Regents that the College should be concerned with publications by Navajos, for Navajos and about Navajos. Yet, the expertise needed to physically prepare for an attractive and professional quality book can, best be performed at this point in time, person skilled in this difficult and demanding area.

In other words, the preparation of the bulk of material in the publications developed by the personnel within the Navajo and Indian Studies Department has been done by Navajos themselves, while the physical preparation of the books has been done by the Director of our Press, who is a non-Navajo.

I should hasten to point out that in the desire on the part of our Board of Regents for quality books that can stand the test of time, the Navajo and Indian Studies Department has utilized in a few instances, the services of non-Indians to write certain portions of books which they are best qualified to prepare. For example, I am referring to sections of books that deal with Navajo resource development, of perhaps the Bureau of Indian Affairs or Navajo education programs. In these kinds of areas, in order to present a total picture, it is necessary to get written materials and information from those people who had the responsibility in their appropriate organizations during the time in question, and who, therefore, are most knowledgeable about the area under consideration.

I feel it is extremely important to recognize the fact that one does not have to read or write English in order to write a book. This might seem contradictory, but Indian groups throughout the United States have proved this to be possible by their publications that stand as monuments to this principle. In our own case, we collect stories on tapes from Navajo people who often cannot speak English, and then those tapes are translated into English by Navajos and prepared by Navajos in a written form. In our estimation the individuals who give of themselves through their stories, most often Navajo, are indeed writing a book, and anything and everything that takes place from the time they tell us the story is mechanical in nature and in no way detracts from their ability to "write a book."

Another major point needs to be made and that is with regard to books written by anthropologists and historians about the Navajo. We do not condemn these efforts and these publications; yet, we rarely praise them. But we strenuously and completely believe that until such time as we have our own publications which tell our own versions of events we are much like students attending schools in the United States who have only books about the United States written by residents of the Soviet Union, Germany, and so forth. While I am certain that perceptions of those on the outside are valuable, I am equally certain that the citizens of the United States would not tolerate a situation wherein schools in this country had access only to materials written by foreigners to teach American children the subjects of American History, American Life and Culture, and so forth.

Origin of Our Project

The format we have been asked to follow does not exactly fit the situation at Navajo Community College. We have produced a number of books and have additional books in preparation. The origin of the idea of publications within the Navajo and Indian Studies Department has already been discussed.

The College received a grant from the Research and Cultural Studies Development section of the Bureau of Indian Affairs headed by Dr. Dave Warren. Under this grant the College is preparing materials relative to a study of Navajo Education. This is one of the significant untouched areas dealing with Navajo life. In my estimation, there is nothing funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs that equals in importance or significance the work done under the program directed by Dr. Dave Warren. I know I speak for other tribes who have received grants from Dave in terms of their total conviction to the overwhelming importance of such a

program.

Navajo Community College publication efforts in the field of Navajo history and culture predates even the existence of this Branch of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The publications prepared by our College and published by the Navajo Community College Press include:

Papers on Navajo Culture and Life, compiled by Ruth Roessel, 1970

Navajo History Vol. 1, edited by Ethel Lou Yazzie, 1971

Navajo Studies at Navajo Community College, edited by Ruth Roessel,
1971

Navajo Stories of the Navajo Long Walk, by Staff of Navajo Studies
Studies Dept., 1973

Navajo Livestock Reduction: A National Disgrace, compiled by
Ruth Roessel, 1974

The Role of Indian Studies in American Education, by Ruth Roessel,
1974

Selected Navajo Historical Occurrences 1850 - 1923, Robert A.
Roessel, Jr., 1974

In addition, the following books are in the process of publication. In every instance, the materials for the books have been collected, and they are in the final publication process.

The Navajo Nation: World War II to 1960

The Navajo Nation Today: 1960 to the Present

Navajo Arts and Crafts

The History of Navajo Education

A Navajo Geography

Navajo Archaeology

Indians of the Southwest

The Plains Indians

Indians of the United States - A Pictorial Account

Navajo Rug Weaving - A Pictorial Account

It should be pointed out that the Board of Regents of Navajo Community College is the group that has the responsibility for approving or disapproving prospective topics and publications. In addition, in those books that deal with sacred materials such as the Navajo story of their origin, an advisory committee of medicine men has been established which check and double check any and all information that may be included. In this way, nothing is printed that has not been reviewed (often many, many times) by a group of Navajo elders and leaders.

Research and Other Problems

The major problem faced by the Navajo and Indian Studies Department in presenting a Navajo series of publications has been, and continues to be, one of money. It is indeed unfortunate that the hundreds of thousands of dollars that have gone to the Center for the History of the American Indian, in Chicago, in no way benefits directly Indian tribes. I remember very clearly the efforts of the Navajo Community College to receive a substantial grant from the National Endowment of Humanities only to be turned down because a massive grant was being made to the History of the American Indian. I am sure that Indians living on reservations feel that the large concentration of money at that location certainly lessens the amount of money individual tribes might receive for their own projects. This is why Indian people and certainly the Navajo tribe are so grateful for the efforts of Dr. Dave Warren who has been our only reliable and constant friend in terms of funds.

The money problem is primarily acute in the area of the actual publication itself. The cost of printing and binding books is costly and the money

for this purpose is, in my experience at least, more difficult to obtain than money to collect the oral traditions from the Navajo people themselves.

Another problem has been the past exploitation by anthropologists and historians of Navajo informants. There is today a reluctance to reveal true stories because of past abuses. This reluctance was easily overcome in almost every instance because the very nature of our project clearly distinguished our efforts from those of outside foreigners. Our efforts could clearly be described and understood as coming from the Navajo people themselves, under the control of themselves, and for the benefit of Navajo people themselves.

Another problem dealt with different versions by different Navajos of the same event. While we collected literally dozens of stories dealing with the origin of the Navajo, these variations in stories always prove more difficult for non-Indians to understand than for Navajos. The Navajos are well aware that their stories differ and do not consider this a disadvantage or even a weakness in their oral traditions. On the other hand, non-Indians look for total consistency and are confused and mistrustful of variations between stories of a single event. Personally, this matter has never disturbed or upset me because each Navajo story is right and correct in the eyes of the person telling the story and our only responsibility is to present to our Advisory Committee of medicine men the differing stories and they in turn select the one or the combination they wish printed.

One of the vital needs we discovered was that of having Navajo researchers, those that go out and collect the materials for our publications, who are individuals that respect as well as understand Navajo life and culture. We found there was no correlation between the level of education and those individuals that have that capacity. In other words, we looked for and had to find people who had their roots in their own culture and who knew enough

about Navajo life so as to be able to understand the story being told by the Navajo story teller or elder. Sending a Navajo out with a Ph.D might have been totally catastrophic, while sending a Navajo out with no education but with the understanding described above might have been highly successful.

This leads me to another point that I think is important and that is the idea that the writing of books can best, if not only, be done by "experts." Such a position is grossly untrue. One of the reasons I have such little respect for books written by anthropologists and historians is that most of these books are not directed at assisting the people about which they write, but rather are directed toward making "generalizations about human nature" applicable primarily to the "more complex modern society." I think you will find that in the future there will be an increasing turning away from such individuals and publications and I, of course, feel this will result in improvement. At least I think the Navajo Reservation will be increasingly closed to anthropologists who want to study and write about the Navajo.

Structure of the Books

As has been discussed in this paper, since we are dealing with seven or more publications by the Navajo and Indian Studies Department, it is not possible to discuss the structure of a single book. In terms of the structure of the book that is supported by the Research and Cultural Studies Development Section of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, we agreed upon the following plan:

1. There would be a section, or a separate book, dealing with a full discussion of Navajo Education from the beginning down to the present. This portion would deal primarily with the nature of the problems and programs, and would include facts and figures.

relative to Navajo Education. In this instance, the primary source of material was thought to be those individuals who had responsibilities for Navajo education during the time in question.

2. A second section, or perhaps a separate book, would be that which relates first to the traditional Navajo concept and type of education and, second, to information and reports relative to Navajo attitudes and efforts at Navajo education. In other words, this second portion would be primarily a Navajo account of Navajo education while the first portion would be an educator's account of Navajo education.

Ends Accomplished

I feel the publications produced at Navajo Community College are unexcelled in their importance in terms of presenting for Navajo people in particular, and all people in general, a picture of the Navajo people and Nation as seen from the vantage point of the Navajo people themselves. I feel there is nothing more important in the education of Navajo students than for them to be exposed to stories and books produced by Navajos from kindergarten through college. The availability of these books in sufficient quantities is essential to the development of a successful, meaningful and relevant Navajo education. The books that we have produced have made a significant stride in the desired direction. The result of these and other publications will be an improved self-image and a positive sense of identity for Navajo people. Without such a feeling of pride no one person or people can stand tall.

It is our earnest and sincere hope that in the future we shall be able to continue the publication of these kinds of books because the needs are still so tremendous. When one thinks that these are perhaps three thousand monographs dealing with the Navajos that are written by historians and anthropologists, and that there are less than two dozen monographs written by Navajos themselves, one can see the nature of the unmet need.

It is vital to remember we are dealing with a culture that is alive and vital today and we are not dealing as anthropologists with something that is gone, dead, or dying. Through our publications, the culture and life of the Navajos will be revealed as a culture rich in traditions and capable of providing the tools by which Navajos can face an uncertain and difficult future. Our strength lies in our culture and our publications reveal that strength.

COMMENTARY

By Benjamin Keen

Northern Illinois University

I have listened with great interest to the papers of Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Slickpoo, and Ms. Roessel. Let me preface my specific comments on the subject of the writing of Indian history by giving my impression of the general tone and significance of these papers. A common theme is their militancy, a stress on the need for the re-writing of Indian history by Indian hands, for the re-conquest, so to speak, of Indian history by the Indians. This militancy, this not unjustified distrust of non-Indian specialists in Indian history, certainly reflects the general upsurge of Indian self-consciousness in recent decades and the rising Indian demand for an end to oppression, discrimination, and white tutelage--in a word, for self-determination.

These papers correctly note that the development of what may be called an "Indian school of Indian history" is necessary to demolish the old one-sided interpretations and stereotypes of the Indian and his culture. This new school, exploiting Indian sources (informants) that could not be adequately utilized by the traditional white historiography, will also help to preserve the oral tribal records--records that may be fading as the Indian elders who are the chief repositories of tribal history and lore die off, and that offer an invaluable means of reinforcing the sense of identity and solidarity to the Indian generations to come.

It is encouraging to learn from these papers that a number of tribal histories written by Indian hands have been completed and that others are in progress. Work along these lines should continue on various levels, from the writing of elementary texts to the preparation of scholarly monographs that will lead to the production of superior new syntheses of Indian history. The development of an "Indian school of Indian history" -- which by no means excludes the participation of qualified non-Indian scholars in the re-writing of Indian history -- requires the training of young Indian scholars armed with the most rigorous and up-to-date historiographic technique; for sympathy and sensitivity to the problem studied, while immensely helpful and even necessary, are not enough. The tribal councils, foundations, and other groups and individuals interested in Indian history should consider how this need can be met.

As a specialist in the history of colonial Latin America, it occurred to me that the experience of the Indian and mestizo school of Indian history which arose in Spanish America, and especially in Mexico, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries may have relevance for what we are discussing here. Thanks to the efforts of pro-Indian friars (the Franciscans above all) in the sixteenth century, there arose in Mexico a number of schools in which Indian upper class boys received instruction in the humanities as well as Christian doctrine. Before the most important of these centers, the Franciscan Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco, suffered a sharp decline in the 1560's as a result of the hostility or indifference of the Spanish colonists and government, it had produced a harvest of graduates who were devout Christians, yet took pride in their Indian cultural heritage. These students of Tlatelolco were the collaborators of Sahagún, Olmos, Motolinia, and other Franciscan and Dominican scholars in the enterprise of preserving for posterity the history and culture of the ancient Mexican world.

. Some of the graduates of Tlatelolco, as well as other educated Indians and mestizos who did not attend the Colegio de Santa Cruz, wrote important histories which display an ambivalent attitude toward Aztec civilization and the Spanish Conquest. Not only do they contain invaluable factual material but, thanks to their peculiarly Indian point of view, they help to re-create the spirit, the flavor of the ancient Indian culture, in a way that Spanish chroniclers could not do. This, of course, would be one of the unique values of an "Indian school of Indian history" in the United States.

The Indian and Mestizo historians of colonial Mexico also exposed the crimes and brutalities of the Conquest -- which is a major reason why virtually none of their works appeared in print before the nineteenth century. One of them, Cristobal del Castillo, who, despite his Spanish name, was probably of Indian descent on both sides, freely expressed his hatred of the conquistadors, calling them "crafty killers" and "murderous robbers." Another, the famous mestizo historian Ixtlilxochitl, denounced Spanish treatment of the Indians. "So great is their misery that I have read in many books which treat of the tyrannies and cruelties of our nations that neither separately nor all together can these tyrannies compare with the toil and slavery imposed on the Indians." To expose the crimes and brutalities of white colonizers, concealed, excused, or mitigated by the traditional historiography, should be one of the tasks of the "Indian school of Indian history" in the United States.

The scrupulous research methods of this same Ixtlilxochitl, who was a descendant of the last king of Texcoco, cultural center of the Aztec Empire, may also have some suggestive value for our Indian desire to know the things that had been done in ancient Mexico, "things not at all inferior to the deeds of the Romans, Greeks, Medes, and other pagan peoples famed throughout the world, although the passage of time and the destruction of my forebears' states has buried their history in obscurity. For this reason I sought with much labor, diligence and travel to collect the paintings and the songs with

which they preserved their histories and annals. In order to understand them, I summoned many principales of this New Spain, men famed for their knowledge of those histories. Among all those men, I found only two who had a complete knowledge of the paintings and signs, and who could correctly interpret the songs, which are very obscure, being allegorical in form and adorned with metaphors and other figures of speech. With the help of these men I learned to understand the paintings and histories, and to translate the songs accurately, in order to satisfy my wish to attain the truth. Therefore, I decided not to use the existing histories that deal with those matters, because the false relations and contradictory interpretations their authors obtained made their accounts confused and contradictory."

Ixtlilxochitl's decision to go to the sources, "not to use the existing histories that deal with those matters" because of their falsehoods and distortions, could well serve as a model for our own "Indian school of Indian history" as it sets about re-discovering its past.

COMMENTARY

By Floyd A. O'Neil

University of Utah

I am delighted that our meeting today is described as a dialogue; it is most difficult to be a critic. The first thing I would like to say about the writing of American Indian history, which is our theme, is that it is moving toward Indian control and very rapidly. That is a salutary thing. Secondly, the tribes themselves are using history and using it very imaginatively at this time, especially those who have dared to venture into the field--not just the pioneering people such as the Navajos and Southern Utes--but others as well.

These tribes have correctly assumed that the area of greatest need was to alter their image in the public schools.

Another thing I have observed, particularly in working with the representatives in helping to find the necessary documentation from the BIA sources in the National Archives and other locations, is that the tribal councils have been extremely adept at laying the groundwork from documentary sources for defending Indian property rights and other Indian interests. And now tribal archives have been created in several different Indian communities, and they will become more popular.

It would be most appropriate for those of us who study American Indian history to be able to go directly to tribal museums, libraries, tribal offices and use the records there. It would be an excellent thing, one which would do a lot of good, if those of us who still plan to write in American Indian history could

have a dialogue with members of the community at the time the material is being written. If the documents are in their communities, there will be more Indians and fewer of us writing Indian history.

In the promotion of tourism and museum displays, the whole idea of cultural representation based upon historical evidence is taking a new and salutary turn. In other observations on this growing movement, Number One in importance is that the relationship between the universities and the tribes be altered. "Going out to talk with them folks" is no longer part of it. The universities are moving in the right direction, but they must move faster and rid themselves of the idea that the education of American Indians is the remaking of them. The Indian scholars are telling us, "To hell with that."

There must be jointly designed programs which give both the universities and the tribes a more dignified role. The administrations of universities are extremely reluctant to deal on a quid pro quo basis with tribal councils. There are many in the West, however, who have finally come to the realization that in certain programs this is a must! The use of Indian students in Indian related programs on campus is long overdue. A few of the universities have gone this route, to their advantage.

When it comes to the production of materials such as we have talked about this morning, another thing of importance is that the tribes should own the copyrights and profits from the books produced. A sensitive point with so many tribes is that the university personnel should not insist that their own academic reputation be furthered by the publication. Commentaries or other forms of publication are perfectly acceptable after they have been discussed with the tribe. You do not need to exclude whites from Indian history, and I do not see the time, as Ruth Roessel indicated, when any group should stay strictly within themselves to write their own histories. Commentaries should be welcome from all sources.

In these cooperative programs, there must be joint planning, particularly for the training. Dr. Keene mentioned the subject of the training of Indian historians. If a university decides they are going to train Native American historians, they should not put them through the same set of curricular exercises that the rest of us went through in securing a Ph. D. It would not harm a history department to talk to a tribal council about what the tribe hoped would be required of an American Indian who is a candidate for the Ph.D.

While we have stressed here the uses of oral history, other sources are also extremely valuable. I have observed that when American Indian scholars go to the National Archives and read the histories from those sources, their interpretation of the actions of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, for instance, is quite different from mine. Sometimes the interpretation is parallel, but sometimes it is exactly opposite from mine.

Another area of importance is that the BIA has at last founded a section that is doing something to help the tribes. Dr. Dave Warren has been mentioned flatteringly here this morning, and my own opinion is that his section should be funded at a much higher level. To see an American Indian in the Bureau of Indian Affairs helping to give contract money to tribes to produce their own curricular items seems like a breakthrough. Certainly, if you were to ask the people at Ute, Nevada, Paiute, Navajo or at Zuni, they would tell you that this was an excellent arrangement. The crunch in publication costs, however, should be met by higher funding from a variety of different sources. A great deal is waiting to be published simply because there is no publication money. The Foundation, the BIA, and the U. S. Office of Education could help Indian self-determination a great deal by allowing more funds for the people to publish what they have already produced.

We need better communication, for the federal bureaucracies sometimes do not know what is going on. At a time when funding is extremely difficult, it would be wise for the Indian communities to be vocal with the funding agencies and tell them what they are doing, why they are doing it, and what their needs are. Also, it should be remembered that the tribes have friends in high places, and those friends can be used to the advantage of all the American society.

My hope is that in the future a more comprehensive view of the American Indian experience will come to us through the Indians themselves, but this is a long-range hope. What we saw here this morning was people interested in doing things with their own tribes, because that is easier than taking the general approach. It is more difficult to relate all American Indian history to all American culture. You can relate your own tribal histories correctly and more accurately, and that is right for now; it should be supported far more than it is.

COMMENTARY

By Alfonso Ortiz

University of Mexico

(Expanded, October, 1976)

SOME CONCERNS CENTRAL TO THE WRITING OF "INDIAN" HISTORY

This is the first symposium I have ever been involved with in which the discussants outnumber the panelists. But, being outnumbered is not an unfamiliar experience for Indians. Neither is being last. However, the problem with being last, the third of three discussants on three papers, is that one runs the risk of having everything one was planning to say already said by one's predecessors. Just to be sure that I got in my licks, I prepared half an hour's worth of comments, and I checked off twenty minutes worth just now as the two colleagues who preceded me were talking. I shall attempt to keep my comments to the point and to be as precise as I can.

First, I would like to comment on the subtitle of this symposium, "The Indian Viewpoint," in the study of history. I am sure the choice of words was inadvertent, but when I first read the subtitle I thought it was very unfortunate, more a part of the problem than a part of any solution. There simply is no the Indian viewpoint in the writing of history. We have here Jim Jefferson, a Southern Ute, Ruch Roessel, a Navajo, and I am a Tewa. We also have here in the audience Cahuilla, Cherokee, Lakota, and members of other tribes. We each have our own sovereign tribal, band, or community histories, and these histories do

not intersect unless we happen to be contiguous or neighboring peoples, as in the case of the Navajo and Tewa peoples. This is not to say, however, that these histories are all mutually antagonistic or incomparably unique; by no means. It just means that there is no the Indian viewpoint. To believe that there is, or to try to perpetuate that notion, is to perpetuate the problem itself, the very problem we are gathered here to address today.

When I first saw the way the panel was set up, I also despaired over the fact that what I would consider the one essential component or dimension in any discussion of Indian history would be missing. I am speaking of the native traditionalists, the people who are the repositories of Indian traditional knowledge. Even though they often cannot speak English, and many would not travel to Chicago to sit in a fancy room like this to talk about tribal traditions, some effort should have been made to get at least one of these people here. The presence of such an individual or individuals would have permitted us to establish a traditional Indian cultural baseline for the meaningful discussion of Indian history, and the reason this would have been valuable should be obvious: Insofar as there is something distinctive and worthy of attention in the native viewpoint when approaching a given tribe's history, it is due to the fact that the traditionalists or elders of that tribe have preserved their traditional culture in some measure. They have preserved something distinctive about their peculiar kind of Indianness, something which enables them, generation after generation, to remain quite different from members of other tribes and from non-Indian Americans in general. That would have been reason enough to have such an individual with us today, to talk about a traditional orientation towards events of the past.

Why I am so concerned about the representation of native traditionalists here is illustrated by a statement which a colleague of mine once made to me. We were talking about the creq-cut desk jokeys with long rows of pencils across their lapels who run most ribal councils in this country, and she stated, more eloquently than I can do here, that they are not the ones who have insured the survival of Indian cultures onto the present time. They may be the ones who predominate in meetings and write the books, but she knows, and I know, that the real directional thrust, the real vitality and tenacity of Indian cultures, derive from the traditional people, where they survive and are heeded.

Going beyond this, there are some more specific reasons why historians and other scholars, Indian and non-Indian, concerned with the writing of new, more truthful, Indian histories should begin with and continually be concerned with Indian traditions. One reason is that, as we would have learned from any good traditionalist, Indian traditions exist more in space, in a place, than in time. It is no accident that some of us who happen to be Indians as well as scholars place the word space before time when we write. I am thinking of my own first book in this case, which I subtitled Space, Time, Being and Becoming in a Pueblo Society. It is no accident at all, because Indian traditions exist in, and are primarily to be understood in relation to, space; they belong to the place where the people exist or originated. Any historians who continue to overlook this fact in the future run the risk of proceeding into the writing of Indian history without taking the most sublime of Indian values into consideration, a totally self-defeating enterprise. And, unfortunately, too much of what has passed heretofore as Indian history reflects this lack of awareness of the distinctiveness of Indian cultural traditions viewed as realities deeply rooted in the soils of the peoples' respective homelands. Indeed, some realities, most notably the sacred,

have little meaning except in the context of their spatial referents. When shorn of these spatial referents, they are likewise shorn of their moral force and a large portion of their range of meanings; hence, of their explanatory value.

I would like to give a couple of examples of the kind of things which have their richest, fullest range of meanings only in the context of the place where they occur, the place where the people live or originate. This is not to say, let me hasten to add, that these things cannot be understood, alveit with great difficulty, here in Chicago. Nor is it to say that they cannot be exported, or that the historian necessarily has to go to the place and tour every rock, mountain, lake or whatever in which traditional events are said to have occurred. I only mean to suggest that historians need to develop a sensitivity to certain tribal traditions that have a bearing on a people's past, present, and aspirations for the future, to wit, on their history, which cannot be understood apart from where they occur.

Both examples concern my own native Tewa traditions. When I was recording Tewa oral traditions--historical narratives, myths, legends, and folklore--I was impressed frequently by the fact that the further away a series of events receded into time, say over a century, the more likely then were to be framed into sets of four. For instance, there was a time when the Navajo people and my own people had a lot of skirmishes with one another. When Tewa elders spoke about skirmishes with the Navajos which took place over a century ago, they would say that the battle took place four days march away, and that it lasted four days. There was so much of this four of this, and four of that, and four of the other thing, that I knew that this was not history in the sense that we, as scholars, understand it.

Another example has to do with the fact that anything which occurred outside of the four sacred mountains of the Tewa world--quite a vast distance--was likely to be similarly rendered into a numerical formula of twelve. One would say that it was twelve days march away, because it was so far that it was convenient to remember the distance in that way. It was convenient because in the Tewa genesis the migration from the northern boundary of the Tewa world to the present Tewa villages took place in twelve steps. Hence, anything which involved going to that boundary or beyond was conveniently remembered in spatial or temporal units of twelve.

What was clearly happening in these brief examples is that the Tewa were persistently attempting to turn time into space, to anchor historical events onto convenient spatial referents, which they used as mnemonic devices to assist them to recall what they thought to be the essential meaning of those events, that these essential meanings were shorn of their temporal referents is due to the, by now, obvious fact that the dominate metaphor governing Tewa existence is spatial rather than temporal. This is true, as well, of a large number, perhaps even all, of traditional native North American cultures.

This tendency to spatialize time presents problems in the writing of Indian history because, as we know, historians tend to do exactly the opposite, to turn space into time. That is to say, instead of understanding experience in terms of the places in which events occurred, historians and Western scholars in general tend to understand events primarily in terms of when they occurred. This, as I have tried to demonstrate herein, does grave injustice to essential dimensions of Indian reality.

There is yet another admonition to be made based upon these Tewa examples. It is that most Western scholars would term what happened in these examples as a process of mythologization. That is to say, beyond the reach of a few generations, historical events occurring among the Tewa tend to be rendered into convenient pre-existing cognitive categories so that they can be remembered in a way that is meaningful in terms of tribal tradition. Not only would the designation of this process as one of mythologization represent an attempt to impose a temporal frame on these experiences and descriptions, but precisely in the process of so doing it would misrepresent them. Hence, just to say that these events were being mythologized and to let it go at that would be to demean and patronize them, as well as to preclude the possibility of understanding them.

I have used just these two examples of patterns or tendencies toward rendering events into numerical formulae anchored onto spatial referents, but there are many such phenomena to be found when one assumes a tradition-sensitive perspective in the writing of Indian history. And phenomena such as these are precisely at the cutting edge of the challenge in the writing of Indian history. For historians to venture into this area, they would, at the very least, have to develop a deeper sensitivity to, and respect for, the tenacity of Indian cultures in America. Hopefully, the time will also come when some historians who are not Indian will take the time to learn to speak an Indian language, or they might at least learn to read those which are now being written. Unfortunately, these latter are not too many and they are not being written down fast enough. The importance of learning an Indian language cannot be overemphasized, for it is the most reliable way to enter a people's world, to understand how they impose meaning and order upon their experience. Until then,

this dialogue we speak of as hopefully constituting the Indian history of the future just will not occur.

Now on the other side, I must say that it bothers me when I hear Indian people and Indian scholars saying "if we choose to believe that we came up out of a hole in the ground, that is our business." It bothers me, but it should bother you as historians more, for it shows that some Indian people have come to distrust historians to the extent that they feel a need to assert total sovereignty over their traditions and their past. I agree that they have every right to believe as they wish, but they should not call such beliefs "history." The kind of truth that is communicated by tribal traditions postulating a prior existence in one or four worlds beneath this one, beneath a lake or in a mountain or whatever, is of another order. The work that comes the closest to describing this kind of truth, a truth which is of critical importance to Indian traditions, is "metaphorical." The truth and the reality are not of an historical order, but of a metaphorical one.

It seems to me that this notion of metaphorical truth is essential for understanding many tribal traditions. For example, the horticultural societies of the aboriginal southwest uniformly postulated their ultimate beginnings as being within the earth. In their traditions of genesis some state that the people moved up vertically through multiple (usually four) underworld homes before finally emerging onto this, the earth-surface world. Other tribes postulate a single underworld home. In each case, however, they perceive their lives as proceeding upward from within the earth on the analogy of plant life. I do not believe they are claiming that at some distant time in the past the original group of ancestors actually grew up out of the earth like plants. Rather, I

believe that such statements reflect their recognition of the profound truth that all life, human and animal as well as plant, ultimately derives from the earth and returns to the earth.

The place which a given one of these tribes postulates as its original point of entry into this world, usually a lake or a mountain or both together, therefore assumes a special aura of sanctity for the members of that tribe. Such a place of emergency serves as a master, all-encompassing, condensation symbol of a people's whole being and identity, the anchor of their very existence. Hence, when they say that they have their beginnings in a particular spot on the landscape I can understand them to mean that they have a special relationship with that place, and that they cannot be understood apart from it because it gives them their very sense of being as a people, from one generation to the next. Understood in these ways we can see that the claims of such tribal traditions as those under discussion here are not unreasonable, childlike, foolish, or merely pretty allegories, all of which they have been called in the past. The traditions make splendid sense, but the sense is not of a historical or literal order. Hence, to keep the debate on that level is quite to miss the point. Neither are these kinds of traditions irrelevant to the historian's task if he or she is to represent a given tribe's view of reality of a historical or literal order. Hence, to keep the debate on that level is quite to miss the point. Neither are these kinds of traditions irrelevant to the historian's task if he or she is to represent a given tribe's view of reality accurately and fully. The challenge, again, is to understand the categories in terms of which a given people think about their past, insofar as said categories give them a

distinctive outlook on the past and thus bear upon the historical enterprise. All of this merely underscores the desirability of developing a greater sensitivity toward, and respect for, tribal traditions, and of learning Indian languages.

I should like now to summarize several observations I have concerning historians, as well as some concrete suggestions. I have long been interested in the writing of Indian history, but there is a tendency when non-Indians write "Indian history" which has long bothered me and upon which I would like to comment. I refer to the implicit "up from darkness" strain of thought in these writings, the view of the inevitability of "enlightenment" or "progress". In anthropology this is the evolutionary school of thought, a school which was especially prominent in this country during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth. The result of this kind of thinking in anthropology has been a legacy of age-area and culture area studies characterized by a laundry-list approach to the collection of data. This kind of thinking is unfortunate, and I admit that it exists as much in anthropology as in history. It is unfortunate, first, because studies characterized by and guided by these kinds of theoretical and methodological biases read like the yellow pages of a small town telephone book. More importantly, it is unfortunate because it leads to the familiar tendency to turn space into time of which I have commented upon above. The age-area and culture area notions are such pristine examples of this relentless linearity or historicity, if you will, of scholarly thought as regards Indian cultures and traditions. It tends to take things which must first be understood as cycles, as repeatable rhythms, happening in a concrete place, and instead render them into arbitrary linear sequences. This is what I mean by the notion of turning space into time, and it is a very dangerous enterprise, for it misrepresents Indian realities as being something other than what they actually are.

I have yet to encounter a tribal tradition in which there is anything remotely resembling the notion of progress. It is a distortion when people who reify a notion like progress, and regard it as inevitable, write about Indian people with the assumption that they, too, are caught up in and with the notion of progress. Historians and anthropologists who write in this vein treat Indian tribal peoples as if they were also grinding, inevitably, inexorably, up the stepladder of progressive enlightenment and toward greater complexity. To insist on perceiving something that is not there is again to distort the true experiences of these peoples.

Something else that I sometimes encountered in the historical literature written about Indians is a catalogue of "contributions" Indian people have purportedly made to some other entity, whether it be to the society of their conquerors or to Western civilization generally. I have no quarrel with the movement today to acknowledge the rightful role of Indian peoples in the formation of the American character and in changes in Europe as well. However, I find the attitude shown by many who pursue these types of studies to be that subordinate, colonized peoples exist solely to make contributions to the onrushing monolithic monster that is Western civilization. This is part and parcel of the "up from darkness" strain of thinking and the reification of progress. Clearly we have to get beyond the inherent dangers these attitudes pose and return to a recognition of the more modest notion that perhaps we Indian people who survived with the essences of our cultures intact really want to make contributions first and foremost to the continued survival and perpetuation of these cultures, rather than to something called "Civilization," which is, after all, alien to our traditional cultures, and usually antagonistic to them as well. I will not go into a disquisition on the materialistic basis from which this and other attitudes arise, but it would be a useful exercise if someone would do so. What are cited as contributions by Indian people to Western civilization are actually stealings and borrowings in large part

It has been implicit in all the comments made here today that we do need to understand why so many Indians today seem to find it necessary to say: "You, whitey, you ripped me off, therefore I am not going to let you come onto my reservation; furthermore, I am going to write my own history and do my own thing." I believe there has been adequate provocation and justification for taking this point of view in the past, but the tragedy of sticking to it is that it precludes a new dialogue, a kind of creative, mutually rewarding partnership with sympathetic historians. But at the same time, historians have to accept and concede that the partnership of the past must have been so one-sided that it caused Indian people to say "to hell with what has gone on before, we are going to do our own thing." The challenge is primarily for you, non-Indian American historians, who are interested in forging a new partnership, to understand how and why things between us deteriorated to the point that some among Indian people find it necessary to say "no more whitey."

I have one more concrete suggestion, aside from the ones I have already mentioned, but, first, a prefatory observation. I am impressed by the number of mossbacks in American history writing about Indian-white relations. There are so many very, very conservative people. I thought we had them all in anthropology, but it increasingly appears to me not to be so. One manifestation of this is the blasted preoccupation with the very distant past. To me it is paradoxical that American historians dealing with Indian-white relations position themselves predominately in the Colonial, Treaty, Allotment, or, at closest in time to the present, the Reservation Periods. Despite the large number of studies that fall temporally within these early periods, I am amazed at the absence or paucity of good literature on the post-1934 Reorganization Period, otherwise known as the Indian New Deal, and succeeding periods. I do not understand the overweening preoccupation of American historians with the earliest centuries of Indian/white contact, the colonial period and the earliest decades of

American nationhood; truly I do not understand it, for the very people who concern themselves with early origins and the founding of the republic are the ones most reluctant to talk to tribal elders who also deal with the origins, the beginning of the beginning of all beginnings. The one deals with it in what we might term, in the language of scholarship, a metaphorical way, while historians deal with it through documents, though I will not go so far as to say they do it in a literal way, because the more I read history, the more I am convinced that history is modern man's mythology. Even the best of Western historical writing has no more meaning and no more truth value than what we have heretofore been pleased to term, with no little air of condescension, Indian mythology.

The danger is that our nearly exclusive preoccupation with the distant past continues to render Indian experiences or Indian aspirations for the present and future opaque. It makes history, as it has made much of anthropology, a continuing handmaiden of the colonial enterprise. That has always been said, and it continues to an unfortunate degree even now. It consigns the Indian peoples and diverse Indian experiences on this land into the shadows of history. Indian people must come out of these shadows before we are to have, all of us, a truly honest American history. If one side is rendered opaque, by being seen as mute, witless, and hence, irrelevant for the purposes of a dialogue, there can be no honest American history. It is a good thing to get on with in the next two hundred years of our national existence, I think, since we are at this milestone in the history of our mutual co-existence on this land we call America.

PROBLEMS IN WRITING INDIAN HISTORY

Co-chaired by Jeanette Henry and D'Arcy McNickle

JEANETTE HENRY

Let me tell you very briefly, a little about the American Indian Historical Society and the Indian Historian Press. The American Indian Historical Society is an honor society that we started after the California Claims Case was presumably settled. We had spent most of our lives in this sort of thing and now it was time to do a little original work: reading, writing, studying, and research. The primary purpose for the organization of the Indian Historian Press, which is a related corporation to the American Indian Historical Society, was first of all, to raise the question of textbook evaluation and correction. To do this, we published our first book, Textbooks and the American Indian, which was a more comprehensive study following a short article that appeared in the Indian Historian in 1967 called "Our Inaccurate Textbooks."

I would like to read you something very interesting. After the article appeared which dealt very briefly with the way the Indian was dealt with in textbooks--the inaccuracies, the misinformation, the misrepresentation and simplification--I received this letter on December 18, 1967, from Arizona State University at Tempe. The letter states: "I have read with great interest your article, etc.; my initial reaction was to note, if one changed instances, one could readily substitute the words Croation, or Chinese for Indian without greatly modifying the theme of your presentation. In fact, you might with advantage, just omit specific names and data, and forward the article to every anti-defamation pressure group in the United States with the instructions to fill in the appropriate blanks and forward to your state high school commission." He then states, "The sad state of

modern school texts is in great part the result of mischief makers like yourself, who are so determined that their particular axe must be ground; that they do not worry lest the child be overwhelmed with special pleading." He states later on, "I shall make a deal with you. Let us by all means write a text which will tell the truth, Indianwise. You shall sing of their accomplishments and their mistreatment by the wicked Spanish and WASPS. For my part, I shall edify the school children with the other half of the story: the sexual aberrations of the society, the happy ways of the Apaches; the treatment of women; dwelling on the good old Indian custom of lodge poling for small offenses, nose biting for greater ones, or murder when the man of the family got really irritated. I shall mention in passing: lice, infanticide, slavery, potlatches, necrophilia, intermittent starvation, inter-tribal war, annual divorce, and the institutionalization of thieves. Then I shall go on to praise the Sun Dance, the morning star sacrifice, lopping off of finger joints out of respect for the dead, and the systematic murder of the aged." And then he says, "I almost forgot, silly of me, the Aztec mass human sacrifice, 50,000 at a time."

This young man was honest; bitter, but honest. If you want me to believe that part of this ideology is gone, or doesn't exist, I won't believe it because we have evidence to prove that there is still prejudice, still outright racism, still misinformation, inaccuracy, misinterpretation, over-simplification and over-generalization in Indian history written by professors who write the textbooks. Now you may quarrel with me on that, but we have been examining the new college texts and after twelve years of struggle for better textbooks, the situation has not changed very much; it is just more sophisticated.

Our principal purpose, even now, is to serve the educational community. We produce readers; we produce a number of books which can be used in the schools. We produced the first book ever to be written and published on the Eskimos by an Eskimo. We published an annual index of literature on the American Indian. We published a newspaper with an 80,000 circulation. We published the Wee Wish Tree, the only ethnic children's magazine in the country with a circulation of 11,500. We published the Indian Historian with a circulation of 5,000. We expect to have published by next February, four additional books. We have been asked, and have accepted, to write a history of the Northern Cheyenne which will be under the supervision of the elders of the Northern Cheyenne; the traditionalists, not the tribal council. We believe that if a book is produced under authority, direction, and approval of the tribal council, there is a very serious danger of politicising it.

We have rejected, therefore, the possibility of considerable funding from the BIA for publication, for that reason. We will publish a book at the expressed requests of the Tlingit of Alaska, without a BIA contract, on their history.

Here's an interesting experience; about two years ago, a manuscript came to us from an Anglo woman. Her subject area was unique: The Navajo Code Talkers. She had a lot of pictures, and had letters from Chairman McDonald welcoming her when she went there to interview the Navajo Code Talkers and an airplane to bring her into the reservation.

Then we began to read. Now, the way we select books, is to have a reader who reads first of all; this happened to be a Crow girl, Chris Parker. She gives the preliminary reading, then I read it for general interest. The last one to read it, for authentication, is Rupert who is an authority on Indian history. Everyone was suspicious, but he spotted an error which

none of us could accept, and that is that the whole theme of the book was that the Navajo code was invented, taught and introduced by a white man by the name of Johnson.

We decided to check it out with the Navajo Code Talkers. We went to Window Rock three times, and every time we met with a little group of the Navajo Code Talkers. (If you don't know who they are, they were the groups credited with the best kept secret of World War II, and the code was never broken. They were responsible for the quick end of the war, and an enormous number of courageous acts which still are not known.) In each case, we checked it out with the Navajo Code Talkers, but they rejected the premise and the book. As a result, after signing the contract and committing \$2,000, the committee rejected the book and refused to publish it.

The author got another publisher and they welcomed her. After they published the book, she then took it to the Navajos and the Navajos congratulated her. This doesn't mean anything as far as we are concerned. We still think the book is wrong and have not accepted the book. We still don't think it's an important book, but the Navajo Code Talkers--at least the little group that was there--had congratulated her on the writing of this book, even though the invention of the code was credited to a white man. The code could not have been invented by a white man, even if he had been brought up with the language.

This is one experience out of many which we, as an Indian publishing house, have been confronted with and have managed to overcome because we have principles. We will not depart from these principles because we require authentication from the Indians themselves where there are Indians who can authenticate, and there always are.

I want to raise a couple of questions for general discussion, and I have no doubt that there will be people who will disagree with me. I object strenuously to the subject for this panel as it expresses a philosophy and an approach to historiography. As Alfonso mentioned this morning, there is no such thing as the Indian viewpoint in the first place because who are you talking about? Are you talking about the viewpoint of the Navajos or the Cherokees, or Choctaws? Who are you talking about from the view of a resource, a primary source? Does this person who is accepting or rejecting the manuscript of this book have the knowledge or the experience? What is his philosophy of historiography? Because he is Indian does not make him an expert.

We reject on the second hand, or I do personally, the idea there is such a thing in historiography as a special Indian viewpoint apart from the professional historical viewpoint, or in the philosophy of historiography. Indians are not separated from the history of mankind. We are a part of history, a great part of history, and because of this idea that when Indians write Indian history it is considered an Indian viewpoint, the immediate implication is that it is not necessarily a valid viewpoint. You don't have to accept that viewpoint, but it is authentically Indian. Nice little Indian scholar; put him in a corner, nobody has to worry, let them stew about it all by themselves with their Indian viewpoint.

No! We are part and parcel of the discipline of history. We demand the right to influence the philosophy of historiography. The philosophy of historiography does not include systematic elimination of the enormous achievements of the American Indian in the history of the world and the history of this country. No. It does not include the misinterpretation of the Indian, the use of such words as "savage" or the use of such designations as "primitive religion", "primitive economy" and "primitive

beliefs," because its meaning in history indicates someone a little less than civilized.

I don't think the time has come for us to describe to the historiographers the beauty, the enormous achievements of the heart of the Indian history among the Mayans and the Aztecs, the Incas, and the peoples of this country.

Let me point out one more thing before I wind up this particular subject. Take religion. How does a religion arise? Have you ever thought about it? It arises with the union of men in a structured society. If and when we find evidence of a religion, with its ritual observances, its taboos, its laws of conduct, and methods of worship, we are entitled to understand that here is a social structure; and I defy anybody to prove otherwise. So you have a people with a social structure, a people whose principal philosophy is the unity of nature with man and whom we must consider now in the philosophy of historiography, not as a special Indian viewpoint, but as part of the discipline of historiography; the best part of the discipline, from what I understand of what is going on in the science of history today.

Then one more question. Indian History? History of what? History of Literature? History of the Arts? History of the Society, the Economy, or the material Culture? History of the Navajo, the Cherokees, the Choctaw? You're not going to be able to discuss Indian history as Indian history; a rose is a rose is a rose. That indicates immediately the simplistic approach and the lack of serious consideration of this great and marvelous part of American history, and the history of a great and magnificent people.

Personally, I have 35 years of experience in the publishing business, in the profession of newswriting. I started out on the New York Times and then went on to the Detroit Free Press, and then to the Herald News when

I met Mr. Costo. This, and a life-time of study, laborious painstaking study, are the only credentials I can present here today, and I think they are enough. In the last 35 years, I've not only written for books and magazines, such as Harper and Row, but I've also proofread, edited, revised and evaluated.

I think, mainly for the Indian people who want to write, there are these very simple points: First, consider yourself. Whether you have a Ph.D. degree or not, consider yourself as a scholar, whether you are writing Indian fairy tales, bed-time stories or histories, and take upon yourself the responsibilities of a scholar and what these responsibilities involve. You must master the literature that has been written as far as you can. You must know what has been said and what has been done, because you might be saying something that was told by a very good medicine man to Ruth Underhill, which she immediately misinterpreted. These anthropologists and historians who have written about Indian history didn't pull it out from the air. They got their information from Indians who have been informing them for more than 100 years. They have more or less regularly misinterpreted them.

You might still be surprised by the enormous amount of information there is, but ask yourself, before you ever set pen to paper, how do I approach the subject? You have to have a philosophy of historiography. What is the foundation of the things that you are going to say? How is it to be authenticated? How do you prove it? Well, I find that a lot of books that have been approved by Indians and written by Indians have an Anglo someplace in the picture. This isn't necessary. There are a lot of Indian scholars who are willing to help and could do a better job. Let me raise another point. Are you asking yourself when you're writing books, for whom are you writing? Who's the audience? Is it a textbook, a resource book, a

scholarly work that you're writing? In order to fulfill the great standard tradition of historiographers, publish or perish, are you writing it in order to make a point? What do you expect to do with it?

In describing the point about authentication, I would like to tell you about a class that I attended that was taught by Father Prucha at the University of Oklahoma, in Norman. He's a very popular, superb teacher, with over 300 people in his class. His last session had to move to a small auditorium. This session was on teaching Indian/white relations. Before this class started, a group of Indian students came and complained to me about Father Prucha. They said that he was requiring them on all text papers, and all papers throughout the course to give him a citation, at least one citation per page. They said, "Why do we have to give him a citation, we are the authorities. We are the Indians, we know and he's asking us to cite?" Well, you know Father Prucha is right. During the class this young Indian girl, who looks Indian, dresses Indian and talks Indian, made a statement concerning Indian history. Father Prucha didn't say whether he agreed or disagreed with what she said. He did, however, ask her to state what her source was. When she replied, "My grandmother and my great-grandmother told me," he asked her who her grandmother and great-grandmother were. You must authenticate it because if this girl happens to be Pawnee, another Pawnee may have an entirely different story to tell, entirely different facts to relate. The point is, you will have to be prepared to authenticate. I don't care if you are Indian or not, you have to be prepared to prove it, especially when you're in a classroom. You have to determine for yourself who is a primary source. There are a lot of fakes running around. You have to decide also what are the criteria and standards of judgment that you are going to use in evaluating primary sources. You needn't overlook some of the written materials and some of the documentation. There's a massive amount of primary source material now being photographically

reprinted, including the testimony by Indians at hearings that go a long way back.

You have, all of you combined, a lifetime of work ahead of you. The prospects have never been so magnificent. Hopefully our kids as they come out of schools will have a discipline or technique which can be used to bring upon the world some of the most significant literature this world has ever seen. I've got an instinct second to none, and I believe that you will see an upsurge of literary endeavor on the part of the Indian. You will then not hear, "we were robbed," or "you did this and you did that," because the outpouring of work will be so great, so entrancing, that there will no longer be any question. Set an example, do it yourself. That's the way.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

QUESTION: I gather that what you are envisioning is a very rich, sophisticated history, with many interpretations. I wonder if you have any notion of how many Indian students are going into history? You already have this great tradition in anthropology.

JEANETTE HENRY: Well, unfortunately not enough. It's difficult to get them to stay in history because of the structure and content of the discipline presently. You really have to buckle under, you have to take it. I think that in time, with help from programs such as the American Indian Studies Department at the University of Minnesota, we have some fine offerings in American Indian history which can attract the Indian student, the Indian scholar. There are a lot of people in other disciplines who will turn to the writing of history, and there are many tribes which are now asking for help in the writing of their history. By the way, who was it this morning, that talked about all those manuscripts you have? Well sir, how come you never contacted us?

QUESTION: Are you providing funding?

JEANETTE HENRY: What do you mean funding? We're not going to give you any money. Are you foolish? We publish books and we don't get federal money and we don't ask for federal money, nor would we accept it. We are independent and we are funding ourselves. Our books make the money. We are looking at manuscripts, we are looking at material that Indians write. If you can't publish those manuscripts, why don't you send them to us? You know about us, there's no excuse. I mean, why must it be published by the University of Utah?

QUESTION: Published by the tribes?

JEANETTE HENRY: What do you mean by that? Do you mean that the tribal council has to approve it? Is that what you mean? You don't have political approval in Indian affairs today.

QUESTION: I have one question. If you publish a book, who would have the copyright, you or the tribe?

JEANETTE HENRY: Anyway you want it. We prefer the writer or the tribe to have the copyright. We have been asked by some authors to take the copyright because it's so troublesome to answer requests for quoting and reprinting. We prefer, as any publisher would prefer, that the author or the tribe take the copyright. We pay the royalties. When the manuscript is accepted, you can have the copyright with our blessing. Right now, we're protecting the copyright of two books that we foolishly agreed to take in our name.

ALAN SLICKPOO: I'd like to make a reply on some of the comments. I'm Alan Slickpoo, Director for the History and Culture Program of the Nez Perce tribe. The tribe has employed me and I have been able to obtain some grants from such organizations as the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Bureau of Indian Affairs so I, too, can talk about money when we need it.

We as a tribe, still consider ourselves within a certain degree of sovereignty, as long as we have a treaty with the United States government. We're still a sovereign nation and we don't want any outsiders coming in and telling us how we lived or how our history should be written, unless they have our exclusive permission (applause). So far the project has not gotten into any political hassle between the people and the tribal council. So far it has run smoothly. I don't know how it is on the other reservations.

When the tribal council hired me as director for the book, I in turn requested that there be a review board, an editorial board to go over that manuscript and finalize it. In order to get my sources of information, I talked to a number of elderly people, selected elderly people, whom I knew or who were known to be knowledgeable in our own history. I interviewed each person individually.

We always hear about the Chief Joseph War. I know there's a lot of controversial things written about it. I asked the people about it. I would ask them what they, as individuals, think about it according to their knowledge. They'd tell me, and we would record it. After I compiled all the necessary information that I thought was significant to our history, I called these people in for a panel discussion just like we have here. We would open up the floor for discussion concerning controversial or questionable events of our history.

To us, Indian people, we believe that in our own tribal societies, our own nations, we have experts who can be recognized the same way as other people who have advanced degrees in white society. We have our own experts. We are familiar with the Sweathouse religion. How many people in this room can tell me what the wiakan is? When a young boy or young girl is actually required to go up on a mountain to seek a spirit, can someone out of some university come up and tell me this is the way it was, or this is the way it should be? It is the people who have gone through these experiences who are the most qualified sources you can find.

I mentioned that there have been over 500 manuscripts, over 500 written materials, whether they be theses, published or unpublished books, or history books which relate to the Nez Perce War of 1877. Everyone wants to get on the bandwagon. In fact, in my folder I have now, I'm reviewing a

movie script for a two-hour television program on the Nez Perce War of 1877, and so far I found some names in there that my people have never heard of. I mean it's amazing! This is one reason why the tribal council went on record as a representative body of the tribe stating that forever after no one is going to come onto our reservation to study us, and then sneak out the back door. The first thing you know, someone's got his bloody hand out there collecting all the royalties he can get out of it.

I'm scheduled to begin writing the dictionary of the Nez Perce language, beginning the first part of the year, which I've received funding for from the National Endowment for the Humanities. There are a number of dictionaries that have been written which are erroneous and misrepresent the language. Because we are teaching the Nez Perce language at the high school, the first thing I wanted to determine was the kind of material we had in our libraries that could be used for reference material. The first book I picked up was about our religion. It was entitled, Chutz-Chutz, the Fox. In my language Chutz-Chutz means meadow-lark, so right there I quit (laughter). I know that I'm going to have a difficult time compiling the dictionary because my language is almost extinct. I think I am about one of the very few in my generation, or the generation after me, that can still speak fluent Nez Perce.

I think that if I appear to be a militant you must remember that my people have been militants ever since we had the first thanksgiving. You have not hear the Indian talk back on a certain particular thing. The Indian was always told "this is the way it was or this is the way it's going to be." He never went out like we are doing today. Years ago, I didn't know I was going to be in Chicago talking to a group of distinguished people. The Indian was very seldom heard or seen. There has to be a line drawn somewhere. I'm sure the rest of the tribal representatives here are just as concerned about it. They don't want their children to come up in one or two generations

to read things that are erroneous or distorted about their people.

A book review on one of the books I was able to edit mentions, indirectly more or less, that I wasn't qualified to write anything about my own people. I took it for what it's worth. I think that this person who wrote the book review has a right to say what he wants as much as I have a right to say what I'm saying this afternoon. I appreciate what Jeanette Henry has said and I take it for what it's worth.

I think Indians have compromised for quite a while now. You who are historians, anthropologists, and who are out in the academic world, are going to have to sit down with us and recognize our people as being experts within their own world. I'm sure people would not like it if I, as an Indian, went over to England or some other place, and tried to say I'm an authority on the English people or I'm an authority on the French people. I couldn't be; I know I couldn't be, unless I lived it and slept it.

I know that so far, our project has received only one negative book review; that of the gentleman from the Smithsonian Institution. I can understand his position. Other people that have placed it in their newspapers and reviewed it have been positive. I don't credit myself as being the main source for writing that material. It's our elderly people. When people say that the book is wrong, they're not telling me, they're telling my grandparents and all the old people that had a part in writing this book. You're insulting them, you are not insulting me.

Thank you.

JIM JEFFERSON: I would like to make some comments about the remarks that are being made now. Just like Alan Slickpoo, the work that I did was

conducted and controlled by the tribe. It wasn't the university saying what was going to be done but the tribe saying what was to be done through the tribal council.

This morning I mentioned that I was not able to write a lot of the history as it was told by the Indians because they asked me not to write it.

Some of the people read the book and said, "Jim, how come you didn't say it this way; you know it's supposed to be this way." I said that I was asked by the elders, the religious leaders, and some of the traditional people not to do it, so I had to honor that.

Now myself, I'm not a scholarly man. I only had a high school education. When I first grew up I had to learn English. I spoke my language, and during the process of just living day to day on the reservation; just going to school, playing ball, etc.; I didn't think that I would be here talking to people who are historians, telling them that these things ought to be done.

With the approach that we made, we instructed the people who were familiar with the documents what we wanted in our history. It would have taken us another 2 years to go to the Smithsonian, the Newberry Library and to all the federal archives, to learn what has already been done by the scholars. The people we selected to do this research talked our language and wanted us to do it our way. They didn't say that they were the experts and that we should do it their way. I think this is what Alan was saying a little while ago.

The Indians who are writing the histories should also listen to their people because they are the ones who are writing the histories. I could have written five or six books for my own benefit, for my own royalties, but I didn't do that. I'm an Indian man and I honor my people.

I have read some of the historical articles about the Utes, because I'm learning as a historian. When it says something about the Utes, I don't care about the interpretation, all I want are the dates. When I get the dates, I start looking through the archives. This is where the university has been quite helpful to me, having the people who know where the records are. A lot of times they have saved me a trip, and in so doing, at the same time it's a learning process for me. I think we have to use these people, or otherwise our goal as Indian historians just isn't going to work.

This morning militance was mentioned. I just discovered I'm a militant historian (laughter). You know, when we speak out, we're militant, and I've been speaking out. I sat back and listened and finally I got fed up and I said, "you're wrong." So I'm militant. If that's what I am, then that's what I am.

Because of an article which appeared in the Sale Lake paper, although I didn't read it, I received an invitation to speak. So I went and gave a regular history talk. Finally, I asked if there were any questions. A person responded saying that they wanted to hear about AIM militancy. It seems that in the Salt Lake paper it said that I was an AIM historian. I said, "Gee, I don't remember consenting to that." As it turned out, one of the AIM groups had asked me if I would gather all the materials on the Ghost Dance. I consented to be the historian for that. Being that the person who asked me belonged to AIM, all of a sudden the papers got it that I was an AIM historian. Anyway, they misinterpreted the whole thing. Being misinformed, they did it again.

Historians, anthropologists and other people in the academic world must be pretty careful about the materials they gather. Many times, like I

mentioned this morning, this idea of "an Indian 'informant' telling you the truth," sometimes isn't necessarily so. Maybe a person might be a little tired or he might have gotten a little irritated and said "what the heck is this guy doing?" I know this to be true. For example when I talked to an old man, he sang his songs, he talked, and I asked him the questions I had. He made me sit there for four days before I got the answer I wanted. One of the things that was so necessary was the patience that I had to have. I think you have to realize that you just can't go onto a reservation for two or three months and gather all the materials you need. Like Alan said, we have to live it, eat it, and enjoy it.

In closing, I would like to say that John Wayne is Alan's favorite hero (laughter). Alan went to the movies and he watched the battles and everything and he said, after seeing John Wayne portraying General Custer at the Little Big Horn, that the reason why things are the way they are today for Indians is that General Custer had instructed the Bureau of Indian Affairs to wait until he got back before they did anything.

JEANETTE HENRY: I just wanted to answer a question that you raised about the Northern Cheyenne. Our arrangements with them is that they are to write their history in their way, with their elders. They have a group of twenty-five elders to put things together. When they ask us to help, we will come. We have an arrangement for the second week in January already. It is their book. They will hold the copyright and they will make the royalties. They haven't decided yet where the royalties will be paid, but it's their business. It's the same thing with the Tlingit in connection with their book. Their book is on art. They own the manuscript. They have prepared it and have authenticated it. What expert knowledge we can give them we will offer but the decision rests with them. The expenses for the publishing are borne by ourselves and the book pays for

itself. We have never lost money on a book and the authors have always received their royalties on time.

I would like to say something about Indian history that might be of interest to some of you. Oral history is really what we're talking about. There have been many oral histories recorded in the documents. For example, my field is California, and there was a historian who did interviews by the name of Bancroft. I found several interviews he'd done with Indians who have lived under the mission system. These were verbatim recollections of Indians' past experiences. They are, in effect, California histories. It seems to me they are a valuable source of information.

QUESTION: I'm Jackie Peterson, from the University of Illinois, formerly of the Newberry Library. What I want to know is whether those of you who are involved in the writing of tribal histories think there is room in the tribe for re-interpretation. If there will be additional tribal histories, what is the function of the tribal histories being produced now on a factionalized basis?

ALAN SLICKPOO: Well, I'll answer the question if I can. Right now, the first book we came out with concerned our legends and the second related to the history, as the people could remember, from the Lewis and Clark Expedition up to 1940. The reason we made 1940 the cut-off date for our own history, was because, after 1940, our boys came back from the service. That was the beginning of a better tribal government, with our present political structure and the tribal council.

I find that writing about the present day is a lot harder than writing back to 1805, from whatever people could recall about what their elders talked about. Just to give you an example, when I speak of elders, my

grandfather was 97 years old when he passed away in 1945. My grandmother was 87 when she passed away in 1944. A lot of these accounts, my sister and I used to hear over and over. That's all people had to do in winter was tell stories, recalling certain dates and experiences. You know, my people used to say that my great-grandmother had this great big ball of buckskin twine. On the string there was a bead of a certain color, a trader bead, to identify what happened that one day. Of course, you had to unroll it all to find the one date but it was interesting you know; very few people knew about it.

Now, we hope to go on, expanding on the publication projects. We're not going to stop at one, two, three, or four books. We're going to expand. We're going to have published, perhaps, other kinds of reading material which might relate to some particular subject; for instance, to our religion. Our religion, perhaps, is quite different from that of the Northern Cheyenne, or from that of the Zunis, or the Southern Ute. We, for instance, never practiced Peyote, and there are certain ways and certain rituals that we went through which I think would be a very interesting subject. We might incorporate the religious aspects, as well as other events of our history into books. Right now, you might say, we're not trying to put down things in detail. We're generalizing; trying to span the entire history of the Nez Perce people.

JIM JEFFERSON: I'd like to answer. Like I said before, in a lot of the work I did I had to honor the wishes of certain people by not writing what they said now. But it's being recorded by putting the oral history into deposits, restricting it with a strict instruction that this is not to be written until such a date, or not translated until after a time when these people are dead. This is the way they want it and this is the thing that I have come to honor.

The Indian people in my community and the other Ute tribes, realize that I am sincere in the things that I want to do. They're revealing to me more and more, the real histories, such as some of the mysteries of Mesa Verde. There's quite a few mysteries and when an anthropologist discovers some of these, I kind of laugh to myself because I'll have known about it! This is the thing that we try to keep hidden within the Indian community. Someday it will all be written. I used to listen to some of the stories and tales and now it's being retold back to me and I remember. Sometimes I'll remember an old song that my grandfather and grandmother sang back in the 30's when I was a little boy, and all of a sudden one of the older folks will say, "Where did you learn that song"?

So that's what makes us different, I guess, from other historians. You understand, I'm not talking for all the tribes; as a matter of fact, I'm not even talking for all my tribal people because some of them disagree with what I say and what I'm doing.

QUESTION: I'm Henry Belden and I'm from Rutgers University, New Jersey. Mr. Jefferson answered much of what I was getting at but I'd like to pursue it a bit further. Do you think that there will be, in the next generation or two, as some of the material is finally allowed to come out, some reluctance to release it, if they find that this information disagrees or conflicts with their understanding? The main problem I'm having is how one reconciles different versions or different understandings of events or movements. I was wondering how you felt about reconciling these problems when you got people together and there were different versions. Did you have a sense that different wording would change the understanding of it?

JIM JEFFERSON: In our religion, or some of the things that we follow, we don't question too much because we pretty well agree about these things.

What we disagree on is a timed event. For instance, the event at Santa Fe, the Spanish Revolt, in which the Utes took part. I'll get two or three interpretations of that event. A person may say a certain man wasn't even there while another person will say he was there. I find as we get into the records, it says that just the Utes or Utahs, as the Spanish say, were there. So, in a sense, according to the records it's not really anybody. These are examples where we have disagreements. Usually these concern the events that have happened, what happened, or who was there, etc.

QUESTION: I'd like to say one thing. It seems to me you're concentrating too much away to no avail. I don't think our history is so important to the non-Indian world. These great authorities are more interested in proving each other wrong than they are about preserving our history. I don't like to see that. I feel like it's growing here, that we've always had great brains. Education doesn't necessarily mean you're intelligent. Intelligence is what you are born with and how you use it. We've always had these great brains and we still have them. You put on a program at this magnificent Newberry Library, and who the heck is writing this history? You've got one and a half Indian brains around here. I can talk to someone from my reservation, and I don't find that we differ that much.

ALAN SLICKPOO: I don't know, I think that what we're trying to say is that you people should recognize our experts. As I mentioned before, in their world they are experts. They are perhaps, equivalent to a Ph.D. or to a master's degree. There's a certain number of people with knowledge and they have got to be recognized just as much as the people who go through the university for seven or ten years. There is one thing I did forget to mention. I went out to other neighboring tribes or reservations, such as the Northern Cheyenne, the Sioux and the Blackfeet, and I talked with

the elderly people there. I asked them to tell it as it was and not to be embarrassed or anything just because I was a Nez Perce. You go ahead and tell me if you knocked the hell out of us. Fine, I want to hear about it. I don't want to hear anything that might be one-sided toward the Nez Perce, such as "You Nez Perces were the greatest," even though we were.

I didn't go there to try and create any animosity or anything. I think a meeting such as this is really important to all of us who are so concerned about Indian history. We have an exchange of ideas and then we go home and think about these things. Maybe the next time we get together we'll have better ideas. This is just what we're trying to promote. There is some information I've held back; for instance, the location of old campsites. If we were to describe the exact area where they were we'd have nothing but amateur archaeologists sitting there in the night. We didn't want to mention any of these things. There are also some things about our religion we don't want to mention because it's too sacred.

QUESTION: I'm Charles Zucker from Carroll College, and I was wondering if much work has been done in American Indian history in the twentieth century, particularly by Indian people who no longer live in the countryside, but who have moved to the cities. What types of sources would you use for that, because, perhaps, traditional sources wouldn't work. Any answers to that?

JIM JEFFERSON: Well again, I can't speak for all the tribes because the work that I'm doing, because of my dissertation, is on the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 to the present. I'm doing one for the university and one for the tribe, because they'll be two different things. The university one will be strictly historical as I'm told. The one for the tribe will be more or less an informational thing; what's happened to the tribe, what were the changes. Some of the other tribes that aren't here are probably doing the same kind of work, doing it at their own pace.

D'ARCY MCNICKLE: There is a study that is going to come out this spring on the Micmac Indians. It is very interesting how Micmac traditions still operate in the city. I want to make a comment here about what some of you have been saying. I'll see if I can crystallize it. We're talking about history which is a discipline coming out of western experience, western culture, and it's come to have certain meanings. We talk about historiography, the writing of history, history of the European, of the white man. As one uses the term, one is thinking in terms of some kind of a linear progression, great climaxes and so on; resolutions that you just don't resolve. But history as the Europeans view it, that fits the European experience, isn't what we're talking about when we talk about the Indian experience.

It isn't important in a tribal history if a certain event happened in a certain time with a certain set of circumstances. What they're talking about is the experience of life, their stories, their relationships with each other. It has to do with basic human relations; dates don't matter, verification doesn't matter; there's understanding and they know what they're talking about. You talk about the Indian experts and sure, they're not all Ph.D.s. As Alan was saying, he could never know what they were talking about, until he had gone there, learned the language, had lived there and had slept with them; becoming a part of the community. That's what the Indians have to share among themselves. It's not a matter of dates and documentation. That's the white man's crutch. Indians are talking about life, about themselves, about their own people. Now, maybe some of you can elaborate on that; make it a little more meaningful.

Maybe one of the main problems is that Europeans have had this hang-up with the absolutes. Their belief in absolutes characterizes their religion and how they recall history. We are much looser, where people realize

that everybody sees things through their own two eyes and so there's a lot of the differences of approach, because you get people who are influenced by this European feeling; the absolute truth, so that it will be done through their critical eyes and it will never be changed.

HELEN TANNER: I'm Helen Tanner and I've done some work inadvertently in Indian history because Nancy Lurie pressed me into it. I think that it's very wrong for Indians to be trained as historians, in the western sense. As D'Arcy McNickle was saying, the concept of history is peculiar to western civilization. To have this very rigid framework, or try to arrange what is important to Indian people in this rigid framework might be very wrong indeed. I think Indians who submitted to the discipline of what's called historical training, are to be admired. But it is necessary to get at this in two ways. As Jim Jefferson said, one to satisfy academic requirements, which are preposterous, ridiculous, and just lead these people to go nit-picking at each other, and secondly, the more important thing is to try to get forth and put together the value of what is important to his people. Now, I myself have an interest in Indian history and I would like to find out what various Indian people think is important about their life and their past. I wouldn't expect it to come out in this rigid framework that we call western history.

I hope Indian people won't try to be too scholarly because so often that comes out as just being pedantic. I don't think it would be honest in terms of what I've been interested in about Indian history. One thing I'd like to propose is making some kind of a team approach. Team approaches are popular in surgery, in medicine and many kinds of new vital things. Mr. Slickpoo says they still have the ball of yarn that still has some beads on it. That's more important, more valuable than an archive

full of documents. The winter counts that are painted on skins the Sioux people have, are something that people who are trained in history and anthropology at the most prestigious university couldn't make any sense of at all. The training that we received as historians has very little relevance to recreating the things that are of the utmost importance. It might be helpful if we had some kind of a team approach. Those of us who've spent our lives up to our elbows in documents may be able to use some help. You can't tell whether the documents tell anything true or not. Somebody might have written it for some ulterior motive, good or bad. You can't tell whether it tells the truth. The document may be complete nonsense. Those of us who are trained in documents, those of us who have access to other types of information, might try to put it together but never be able to prove anything or get at the truth. We might be able to least, to approach a better type of a presentation that's important to the western world and the non-western world.

CHRIS CAVENDER: I have two concerns. One is a minor concern and one a major concern. I'm a Dakota, more commonly known as Sioux, from the state of Minnesota, from Macalester College. I'm planning to do a couple of things about the Dakota in Minnesota, particularly regarding the Sioux War of 1862. There's a lot of white historians that have written a lot about that and that interests me because the Sioux War occurred about seven or eight miles from where I live. I had relatives who signed treaties; I had relatives who went on delegations to Washington, D. C.; relatives who were victims of atrocities. I was thinking about my relatives and my ancestors, and ancestors of friends of mine who were involved in the interaction between the white people and the Dakota and some of the stuff that has been written by the white historians is ok and some of it is bad, but it's sort of one-sided because a lot of the Dakota things are

not included.

Anyway, when I start writing, it's going to be based on oral history. A lot of things based on what people have told me are really incredible. Just to give you an example, two of the people who were prisoners at Mankato were medicine men who had power. They transformed themselves into water snakes and swam across the river. Now, we've got the names of those people; I know the people who tell that story, but to the white historians it is utterly ridiculous, incredible. Dr. Ortiz mentioned the story this morning about metaphorical truth, Jeanette Henry talked about authenticating, and I know the white historians are certainly interested in making sure that what is said is authenticated. I'd be interested in your reaction to that. The other concern that I have is when Native Americans write about Native American history, just how much of the historiography and anthropology concepts and terminology of the white historians should be considered. I'd be interested in any response to that.

JIM JEFFERSON: Let me make a response on the first issue. I've discovered in the treaty of 1868 for the Ute tribe, that the people who signed these treaties weren't Utes at all. I can't find any trace of (I asked my people) who signed these treaties. Also, at the same time, what you're talking about and what I wanted to write about are those legends which are x-rated. You know, you just don't tell this to little kids. Yet, the Indian people and the Indian world tell this to their little kids as a part of their winter-time stories. Nothing is hidden between an Indian man, woman and child, yet we couldn't tell this to others. The general public would have an outcry about it. We eventually will come out with these things and the things that happened that are supernatural, such as what was mentioned above about the changing of men into snakes. You have a trend where this is going to happen. I'm just waiting for a time period when it's right to get into it. So what you are trying to say and what you're going to do, as

far as I can see, may or may not be for the historians, but I have run into it and I'm pretty sure Alan has run into it.

Anthropologists say that we came across the Bering Straits, But the Indian people say no. When I was down at Cherokee, I asked the Cherokee people about this, taking out a brochure to show them that stated right on top that they came across from the Bering Straits. I asked them if they believed in that. They said, "No, it isn't true." If you look in the encyclopedia, the new one that's coming out, we've tried to put an end to that. We're saying that the Indian people were born here and our mythology is true just like anyone else's. All of the people in the world indicate they were born a certain way, whether it was in the sea, in the land or from the sky. Creation is explained in the Bible for some people. Why should the Indian version be considered not true, because it is true. These are the things that we're probably coming out with more and more.

RUTH ROESSEL: I'd like to talk about what took place this morning. I'd like to say something about Navajo history and culture. I don't know how to answer some of the questions that have been asked. I sat there and thought that it's up to the Indian people the way they look at their culture and how important it is to them. I was interested in my people and in Indian culture. I spent ten years down at Arizona State University. There I used to think that the Navajo people are losing their culture and arts and crafts. You're looking at something from the outside. I was feeling like there was a blank sitting here, like there's nothing inside. If you don't do anything about it, we'll disappear.

That's the way I was looking at the Navajo reservation six or seven years ago. At the time, I was involved in community action programs. My husband and I travelled throughout the United States and visited the other Indian tribes, and saw their problems and where there was a need to learn more about other Indians. When I got

involved in the Navajo Community College on the Reservation I learned something when I went into the classroom. I went to the school there, and I didn't have my master's but that's not important to me. What is important is trying to do something to help my people. I went to the classroom and I began to think that there was no material on the Indian history. We were talking about Indian studies. I think it's almost related to what we're talking about here today. There are no Indian materials. At that time there was nothing. Only a few books had been written on the Indian people, and this is why we began with our interest. I felt there was need. This is the way we feel. If there is a need on our reservations, it's up to us to go in there and develop what is needed there. I'm sure Dr. Ortiz knows about it because he's been with us and worked with us in these areas.

So that's the way I see it. We must always go back to our people. If we are Indian educators we have to sit down and understand our people and their needs. This is where it's beginning; Indian studies and writing books for our people; our young people in the high schools, grade schools and college. There is a need right now. This is where I feel it's very important. We must try, I don't care, maybe make mistakes, but just show that you can!

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